

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-03 SS-20 NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 L-03 SSO-00

NSCE-00 NEAE-00 DRC-01 /063 W

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1759

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7177

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, IN

SUBJECT: HARCOS/FLETCHER -- PRESS HANDLING

REF: A. STATE 112202/1

B. CALCUTTA 1049

1. WE HAVE PREPARED A DETAILED CHRONOLOGY OF THE WHOLE HARCOS/FLETCHER CASE WHICH WE WILL BE SENDING YOU BY SEPTTEL. WE ARE ALSO REPEATING CONGEN PICKERING'S VIEWS FROM CALCUTTA. AS YOU WILL SEE, THE AMBASSADOR AND MRS. MOYNIHAN, THE CONSULATE GENERAL IN CALCUTTA, AND THE EMBASSY HAVE BEEN DEEPLY AND EXTENSIVELY INVOLVED FOR THE LAST 13 MONTHS IN TRYING TO GET THE INVESTIGATION COMPLETED, THE TRIAL HELD, AND HARCOS AND FLETCHER TREATED WITH A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF DECENCY AND RESPECT. HARCOS AND FLETCHER HAVE BEEN LESS THAN FULLY RESPONSIVE TO OUR ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND THE CASE AND TO ASSIST THEM. WE ARE GOING TO MAKE AVAILABLE A MORE RESTRICTED VERSION OF THE CHRONOLOGY TO LEW SIMONS (WASHINGTON POST) AND OTHER JOURNALISTS WHO ASK FOR IT TO INDICATE THE TYPES AND NUMBER OF CONTACTS WE HAVE ALL HAD WITH THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT, THE FLETCHER FAMILY, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AND THE DEPARTMENT ON THIS CASE. THIS LATTER CHRONOLOGY WILL NOT INCLUDE ANY DETAILS OF OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH INDIAN OFFICIALS, HARCOS/FLETCHER, OR THEIR LAWYERS SINCE WE ARE CONCERNED BOTH ABOUT COMPROMISING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF

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OUR EXCHANGES WITH ALL THESE AND RAISING POTENTIAL LEGAL PRO-

BLEMS WHICH MIGHT AFFECT THE TRIAL AND OUR ACCESS TO IT.

2. ON THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HARCOS AND FLETCHER'S CASE, WE AGREE COMPLETELY WITH CONSUL GENERAL PICKERING'S VIEW (REFTEL B) THAT ANY QUERIES ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CASE SHOULD BE REFERRED TO HARCOS AND FLETCHER'S LAWYERS. WE HAVE NO FORMAL KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THE TWO ARE BEING CHARGED WITH, AND THINK WE SHOULD AVOID SPECULATION--WHICH IS WHAT ANY COMMENT ON DRUGS WOULD REPRESENT. MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW, ESPIONAGE, PRESS COMMENTS, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE07177
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740136-0231
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974057/aaaaafx.tel
Line Count: 70
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 112202/1
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Aug-2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HARCOS/FLETCHER -- PRESS HANDLING
TAGS: PFOR, CASC, IN, (MARCOS), (FLETCHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005